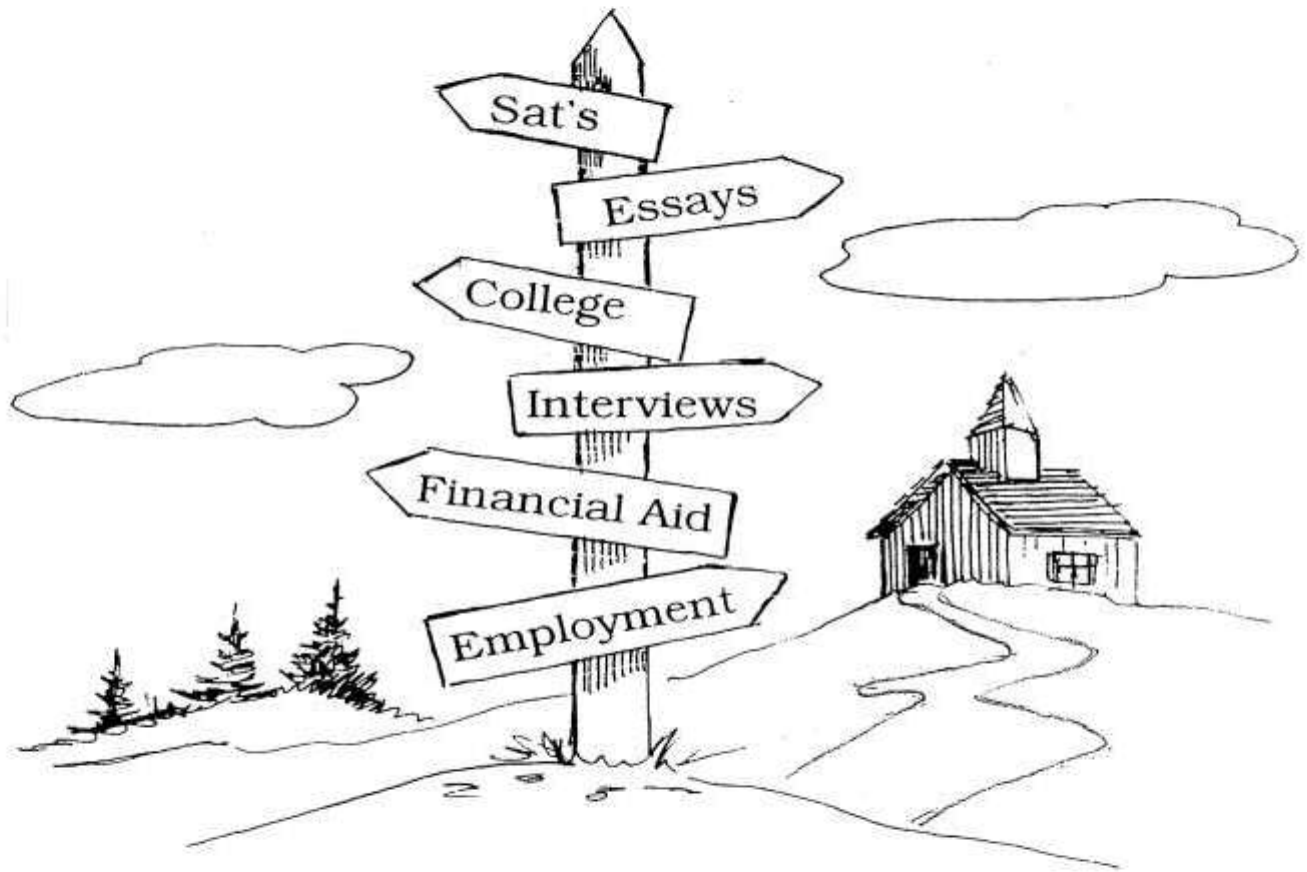


WESTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

Guidance Department



Junior – Senior Planning Guide

2015

January 2015

Dear Students and Parents:

We are pleased to present you with the new *Junior/Senior Planning Guide*. This planning guide is designed to provide you with a comprehensive, current resource that will help you to explore your options after graduation and help guide you throughout the post high school planning process.

Whether you are bound for college, military service, trade school, employment or a gap year, we hope that the information contained in these pages will make the decision-making process at this critical stage of your life a little easier. Use this booklet as a guide as it will provide answers to many of the questions you will have. Also, start to visit the Guidance Office frequently to avail yourself of its resources. The counselors can assist you with materials, career and college searches, and financial aid information.

The planning process is hard work. To begin the process, the counselors conduct a 3-day workshop with juniors in January and February. We also encourage all parents to attend the College Planning Night at the high school. You will find that your counselor is a vital resource during these months. Meet with your counselor for post high school planning during your junior year and follow up with regular visits in the fall of your senior year. Your counselor is an excellent source of information, especially when you cannot find an answer to a question, don't know where to look, or when you just need to talk.

Please help us to help you. Get started today by discussing this book with each other. Begin talking with family and friends about your plans. By working together, we hope to make the transition to your post high school experience as smooth as possible. We look forward to working with you on this important and exciting process.

Sincerely,

The Westwood High School Counselors:

Lynne A. Medsker

Maryanne Collieran Bowe

Kara Kilroy

David Fredrickson

Caroline Higgins

INTRODUCTION

Your junior year is a good time to start making concrete plans for your future. It is time to take stock of yourself. If you are not sure about your post high school plans, here are some questions you might want to ask yourself:

1. What do I want to do with my future? What are my goals?
2. What is important to me? What do I enjoy?
3. What kind of student am I? Based on my academic record, what realistic options are open to me?
4. What am I good at? Can I build a career around my talents?
5. What opportunities are available to me?
6. Where can I get information that will help me make realistic decisions?
7. Have I talked with my parents, my counselor, my teachers, my friends about my plans?

BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ALTERNATIVES ARE APPROPRIATE FOR YOU?

- ☐ 4-Year College or University
- ☐ 2-Year College
- ☐ Trade School
- ☐ Military Service
- ☐ Employment
- ☐ Prep School
- ☐ Gap Year
- ☐ Other _____

Regardless of your plans, make an appointment with your counselor now to discuss the various alternatives open to you.

JUNIOR MONTH-TO-MONTH CALENDAR

September

- o Think about future plans
- o Register for PSAT/NMSQT
- o Obtain dates/places of College Fairs
- o Plan next two year extracurricular and community service activities
- o Continue to work on academics

October

- o Read PSAT/NMSQT Bulletin
- o Take PSAT
- o Put forth best academic effort in those last years
- o Study hard!

November

- o Talk to counselor about college interests
- o Begin to involve parents in college choice process

December

- o Using PSAT/NMSQT results and materials, begin to develop range of colleges
- o Talk with graduates who are home from college

January

- o Continue career exploration
- o Register online for all SAT's and ACT's
- o Prepare for mid-year exams, (colleges look carefully at junior year grades.)
- o Plan college visits for February and/or April vacations
- o Attend Junior Workshop

February

- o Visit colleges during February vacation
- o Register for Senior courses
- o Attend Junior Planning Workshops
- o Research interesting and challenging summer courses, jobs, or activities

March / April

- o Apply for proposed summer activities
- o Continue to develop a preliminary list of colleges
- o Review college websites
- o File service academies and ROTC scholarship applications
- o Visit colleges during April vacation
- o Explore Early Decisions/Early Action Options
- o Take ACT

May

- o Ask teachers for recommendations
- o Take AP Exams
- o Take SAT

June

- o Continue college search
- o Arrange college visits and/or interviews for summer

Summer

- o Continue to research colleges
- o Register for SAT or ACT in the Fall
- o Begin drafts of your essays
- o Keep extracurricular and community service going
- o Start Common Application in August

SENIOR MONTH-TO-MONTH CALENDAR

September

- o Make appointment to see counselor
- o Register early for Fall SAT or ACT
- o Finalize college list with counselor
- o Get off to a good start academically
- o Plan college visits and interviews
- o ACT offered
- o Revise final draft of essay in Writing Seminar

October

- o SAT offered
- o Check for local college fairs and visits
- o Begin filling out applications
- o Send Early Decision or Early Action applications by deadlines
- o Check to see if schools require a CSS profile for Financial Aid

November

- o SAT offered
- o Research sources of private outside scholarships throughout the year
- o File CSS Profile if required
- o Attend Financial Aid Night

December

- o SAT offered
- o ACT offered
- o Finish applications and essays to colleges
- o Check all application deadlines

January

- o File FAFSA or other appropriate financial aid forms after January 1
- o Submit final applications

February

- o Check/Apply for private scholarships
- o Have you sent all necessary forms and applications for financial aid?

March

- o Send any new material to colleges which may help

April

- o Review your college responses and aid offers with your parents/counselor
- o Decide where you wish to visit if possible
- o Write withdrawal letters to colleges you will not attend
- o Make final decision—send deposit by May 1
- o You should have received your FAFSA acknowledgment/Student Aid Report (SAR)

May

- o AP Exams
- o Fill out dorm form
- o Send original and signed SAR to your chosen college

June

- o Graduation

Summer

Enjoy Yourself! You Deserve It!

CHOOSING A COLLEGE

A. Making the right choice

Choosing the right college can seem like the most important decision you'll ever make. After all, your college education will affect the rest of your life. "What if I make the wrong choice? What if I'm not happy there? What if I don't learn anything? What if I don't get in?" It can be scary.

Relax. First, there is not one magic choice. There are likely to be many institutions at which you would be happy. Second, if you do find that you are unhappy during the first year, you can always transfer to another college. Your first year's experiences will aid you in making a more informed choice the second time if you need to transfer. Third, the only poor college choices are uninformed choices, those made without enough information.

B. Gathering information

One major purpose of this Planning Guide is to help you gather information in an organized fashion. By doing so, you will be better able to make decisions based on fact.

1. The Guidance Office is an excellent source of information. Make an appointment with your counselor to discuss your plans (or lack of plans) and ask questions. Don't wait for your counselor to come to you! If you're not sure what you want to do, your counselor can help you clarify what your interests and talents are and identify colleges that would be a good choice for you.
2. Talk over your present plans with your parents.
3. Familiarize yourself with the contents of this Planning Book as it will answer questions you may have and it will give you an idea about what will be expected of you.

C. What are you looking for?

As you begin your college search here are some questions to consider and discuss with your parents, friends and counselor.

Size

How big a college would you like? If you want to know just about everyone in college by name, you obviously will not choose a major university of 20,000 students. On the other hand, a small college of 1,200 has a very different environment. It is good to visit both large and small schools to get a feel of both types.

Distance

How far away from home would you like to be? Do you want to be able to get home for Thanksgiving? Some people find being far away too lonely, others enjoy the freedom. Sometimes staying close eliminates the problem of adjusting to a new environment, sometimes being too close keeps you in old ruts. Can you and your family afford the travel costs if you go to college in Colorado or California? How many times in the year would you be able to travel back and forth? Do you want to experience life in a different part of the country for the next four years?

Since many colleges like a geographical mix in their application pool, students from Westwood may have a slightly better chance at some Midwest, southern or west coast colleges than they would in comparable colleges in the northeast.

Setting, Environment, Social Lifestyle

What location do you want? Urban or rural? Boston University, New York University and the University of Chicago, for example, are in the middle of big cities, which could be fun or distracting. Rural colleges offer lovely, quiet campuses. For some people, these are the best places to study, for others they're not.

What do you want from the place where you will live? Does the religious affiliation of the school make a difference? What is the racial and ethnic mix of the student body and faculty? Do you want to be in a school where most of the students come from one part of the country?

What kind of social life would you like? If you intend to go to concerts every few weeks, and love the hustle and bustle of a city, then the cornfields are not for you. If you ski, swim, or golf, you should look for a college that will provide such opportunities. If you need museums and chamber music concerts to nurture your spirit, you should choose accordingly.

How Many Students Live on Campus and is Housing Guaranteed?

What life-style do you want? There are conservative schools, liberal schools, fraternity/sorority-oriented schools, gung-ho football schools, and religiously oriented schools. They all give you an education. Consider the kind of education you want, as well as what you want surrounding you when you're not studying.

Special Programs, Services and Facilities

Try to identify colleges offering activities and resources in which you are interested. What academic majors are available? Does the school offer a 3-2 engineering program? Does this college have ROTC or a Co-op program? Is this school in a college exchange or consortium program? How important is an Olympic size pool, a state of the art computer lab, a black box theater or an extensive art studio facility?

Faculty

Who are the teachers actually teaching the courses? In some major universities oriented to research and graduate studies, little of the teaching of freshman and sophomores is done by full professors. In such places, assistant professors and graduate teaching assistants are the teachers you will interact with most for the first two years. Ask in college interviews who, in fact, teach freshman English classes or leads “sections” in such traditionally large underclass courses as “Introduction to Psychology” or “History of Western Civilization.” What is the average class size? How large are introductory courses? How much contact will you have with your teachers? How important is that to you?

Cost

While cost is undoubtedly very important, do not limit your choice of colleges to only those you can afford without financial assistance. Many of the more expensive private schools have solid financial aid programs, which may cover anywhere from 20% to the full cost, depending on your need. A good plan would be to choose several colleges, including one you can afford and several for which you need aid. Although financial aid may seem uncertain at times, limiting prospective colleges on a cost basis alone may exclude some excellent colleges from your list.

D. Types of Schools

COLLEGE: An academic institution that offers educational instruction beyond the high school level in a two-year or four-year program.

UNIVERSITY: An academic institution which grants undergraduates and graduate degrees in a variety of fields and which supports at least two degree-granting professional schools that are not exclusively technological (such as medicine or journalism). It is composed of a number of “schools” or “colleges”, such as the College of Engineering or the College of Business.

LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE: A four-year institution that emphasizes a program of broad undergraduate education. Pre-professional or professional training may be available but is not stressed.

TWO-YEAR COLLEGES: A two-year institution of higher learning which provides career and vocational training and academic curricular in both terminal and transfer degree programs. A community college is a type of two-year College.

TRADE SCHOOL: Trade schools offer specialized training in specific work fields such as drafting, cosmetology, computer technology, automotive, or culinary arts.

MILITARY SCHOOLS AND U.S. SERVICE ACADEMIES: Federal military academies prepare officers for the Army, Navy, Air Force, Merchant Marines and the Coast Guard. West Point, Annapolis, The Air Force Academy, and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point require recommendations and nomination by U.S. Senators or U.S. Representatives. Private

and state-supported military institutions, however, operate on a college application basis, as does the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. They all offer degree programs in engineering and technology with concentration in various aspects of military science. (See below for application procedures to Service Academies. See Appendix B for a sample letter to request a congressional nomination to a United States Service Academy.)

E. SERVICE ACADEMIES AND ROTC SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

Those interested in the U.S. Service Academies and the R.O.T.C. scholarship programs must begin as soon as possible to insure that they receive full consideration.

The first step in securing an appointment to one of the academies is to write the Admissions Office or go directly to the website to complete a Pre-Candidate Questionnaire.

Admissions Office
U.S. Military Academy
West Point, NY 10996
<http://admissions.westpoint.edu/apply.html>

Admissions Office
U.S. Air Force Academy
U.S.A.F. Academy, CO 80840
www.academyadmissions.com

Admissions Office
Naval Academy
Annapolis, MD 21402
<http://www.usna.edu/admissions/>

Admissions Office
Merchant Marine Academy
Kings Point, NY 10024
<http://www.usmma.edu/admissions/>

The second step is to write to each of your senators and your congressperson and ask that they consider you as one of their nominees. In this letter you should indicate your first, second, third, and fourth choices for academies as well as:

Your name, address, and telephone number
Date of Birth
Social Security Number
High school name and year of graduation
Names of your parents/guardians

The Coast Guard Academy has an admissions procedure similar to other highly competitive colleges. There is no nomination process involved. Go directly to their website:
<http://www.gocoastguard.com/find-your-career/officer-opportunities/officer-faqs>

R.O.T.C. Scholarship Programs involve a competitive application process as well. In addition to the written application, candidates must undergo a physical examination, formal interview, and a physical abilities test. The first step in the process is to write for an application:

Air Force ROTC/RRUF
Maxwell Air Force Base
Alabama, 36112-6663
<http://afrotc.com/admissions/>

Army ROTC
Box 9000
Clifton, NJ 07015
<http://www.goarmy.com/rotc.html>

Navy ROTC
Box 3060
Hyattsville, MD 20784
<http://www.nrotc.navy.mil/index.aspx>

BUILDING A COLLEGE LIST

Inherent to this task are two considerations: first, how many schools should I apply to and second, what range of schools should be included with regard to admissions competition? During the junior college planning workshops, which we conduct in the spring of the junior year, we teach students how to build a college list based on their individual interests and achievements.

We discourage students from adopting the “shotgun approach” of applying to a multitude of schools. We also discourage students, regardless of academic ability, to “put all of their eggs in one basket” by applying to only one institution or one level of college. As a general rule, we advise that students apply to approximately six to eight schools which vary in levels of selectivity, but which have the most important features desired by the student. As long as the student does not overly limit himself/herself geographically, finding such a group of schools is not that difficult a task when we consider the large number of colleges and universities found in the United States. Your likelihood of admission to the schools on your list is based not only on your background, but also on the extent of the competition for places in the freshman class. Think about your colleges in terms of three categories.

REACH: Colleges where your chances of admission are not likely; but still possible.

REALISTIC: Colleges where the likelihood of your admission is probable (50/50).

SAFETY: Colleges where you will likely be admitted.

As you do this thinking, be optimistic but also realistic. Look to see that your group of colleges has balance across the levels of admission difficulty. Since the cost of a college education is a key factor to most people, it is important to also have a balance in the range of college price tags. We highly encourage students to have a financial safety school on their list.

No foolproof method exists for identifying your reach, realistic and safety colleges (as there are so many individual variables), but the following approaches may be helpful.

Utilize Naviance and the objective guidebooks like Peterson’s and Barron’s for information on selectivity. Compare yourself against this information. Are your GPA and standardized test scores on par with that of other students at the college of interest? If so, this may be a competitive college for you. Naturally, if your profile is either significantly higher or lower than those you see, the college might be either a backup (if higher) or a reach (if lower).

COMMONLY USED TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

A. Testing Terminology

ACT: AMERICAN COLLEGE TESTING PROGRAM: The ACT is a college entrance examination that was used primarily in the Midwest and south, but has gained popularity in the east. Somewhat like the SAT and SAT Subject Tests combined, the ACT test covers four areas: English, Math, Reading, and Science. There is an optional writing section that we encourage all students to take. Individual scores for each area tested as well as a composite score are all given.

AP: ADVANCED PLACEMENT: The Advanced Placement Program is a program of college-level courses and exams that gives high school students the opportunity to receive advanced placement and/or credit in college. The AP exams are three-hour tests administered in May each year at Westwood High School for students who are enrolled in AP courses.

CB: COLLEGE BOARD: This is the organization which sponsors the most widely accepted battery of tests for college admissions. The Educational Testing Service (ETS) is the division of the College Board that administers the SAT and SAT Subject Tests.

ETS: EDUCATIONAL TESTING SERVICE: ETS is the operational phase of many College Board programs. It includes the development and administration of the Board's major testing programs. ETS is a separate and independently governed nonprofit organization.

PSAT/NMSQT: PRELIMINARY SCHOLASTIC ASSESSMENT AND NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP QUALIFYING TEST: The PSAT is a practice test taken by juniors in October as an introduction to the SAT. The NMSQT Selection Index Score is used to determine the top scholars in the country for the National Merit Scholarships. The PSAT is also a source through which some colleges use to contact you.

PLAN: The PLAN is a practice test taken by sophomores in October as an introduction to the ACT.

SAT: The SAT is a multiple-choice test designed to test your aptitude for college work. There are three sections of the SAT: Critical Reading, Math, and Writing.

SAT SUBJECT TESTS: The SAT Subject Tests cover a variety of academic subjects and are designed to test your level of knowledge. Students must investigate college requirements carefully and know which tests are given when.

TOEFL: TEST OF ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: The TOEFL is given to evaluate the English proficiency of people whose native language is not English. The test uses a multiple-choice format to measure the ability to understand North American English. The test consists of three sections: Listening Comprehension, Structure and Written Expression, and Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension.

B. Admission Plan Terminology

EARLY DECISION: If you are certain by the early fall of your senior year that you want to attend a particular college, and if you are willing, this is a binding agreement to sign a statement agreeing to attend if admitted, you may want to apply Early Decision. The application deadline is usually early November. The college will notify you by mid-December. If you are accepted, you must withdraw applications to all other colleges. For most students November may be too early to decide where you would like to be ten months later. In choosing Early Decision candidates, admissions officers are looking for very clear indications of ability. The scrutiny of your credentials is sometimes much closer than in the regular admissions process. You may, on the other hand, have a slight advantage because you are clearly signaling to the college that you are committed to attend if admitted.

EARLY ACTION: Early Action is another option for early notification of acceptance. In this instance, however, students are not obligated to attend that school and to withdraw all other applications. Accepted students are allowed to use the Candidate's Reply Date of May 1 and therefore, hear from all their schools before making a final decision on which school they will attend. (Colleges typically have either an Early Decision option or an Early Action option, but not always both.)

ROLLING ADMISSIONS: One of the most popular methods of notifying students. As colleges accumulate complete information on a candidate, the admissions board makes decisions and notifies students sometimes within three weeks of receiving all the data.

DEFERRED ADMISSION: This is an admissions plan whereby a student applies to a college and is notified of acceptance during the senior year of high school. The student then may take off a year for travel, work, or other projects before attending college, with permission from the college to which she/he sends in a deposit by May 1.

WAIT LIST: In addition to accepting and denying applicants, many colleges place students on a waiting list for admission. As accepted applicants decide to attend other colleges, the school will offer their places to students from the waiting list.

CRDA: CANDIDATES REPLY DATE AGREEMENT: Originated by the College Board, this agreement establishes a common date, May 1, that is the earliest a subscribing college may require an accepted applicant to say whether he or she plans to attend. This allows students to make informed decisions when all alternatives are known.

C. Financial Aid Terminology:

CSS: THE COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP SERVICE: is the financial aid division of the College Board. It provides a needs analysis service for financial aid applicants.

CSS/FINANCAIL AID PROFILE: The Financial Aid Profile, more commonly known as the PROFILE, is used by many private colleges and universities to help them determine how to award private, non-federal student aid funds. Information about filing for a PROFILE is available at <https://profileonline.collegeboard.com>. This includes a list of all colleges, which require the PROFILE. Public colleges and universities do not require the PROFILE. There is a one-time registration fee, plus a per college processing fee for every college the student applies to which requires the PROFILE.

FAFSA: FAFSA or the FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID is used to apply for financial aid from federal student financial aid programs. The FAFSA must be completed online at www.fafsa.ed.gov.

D. Miscellaneous Terminology:

TRANSCRIPT: A record of your final year grades and credits earned for all subjects taken since 9th grade.

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT: Most colleges will only accept an “official” transcript which is sent directly from the Guidance Office.

LIBERAL ARTS: A degree program consisting of study in the areas of the arts, natural sciences, and humanities.

ASSOCIATE’S DEGREE: A degree granted after satisfactory completion of a two-year program.

BACHELOR’S DEGREE: A degree granted after satisfactory completion of a four-year program.

COMMON APPLICATION: Almost 500 colleges and universities in the country use the “Common Application”. Participating colleges all give equal consideration to the Common Application and the college’s own form. The application is completed only once and can be sent electronically to colleges. This procedure simplifies the application process by saving time and eliminating paper. The common application is available online at www.commonapp.org.

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS

Most of you have already taken the Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test (PSAT) and the PLAN (practice test for the ACT). Other tests you have heard about are the SAT, the SAT Subject Tests and the ACT. Those students in Advanced Placement courses will take Advanced Placement Examinations (AP).

SAT:

The SAT measures three areas: critical reading, math and writing. The critical reading questions measure your ability to understand what you read and the extent of your vocabulary. The math questions measure your ability to solve problems involving arithmetic reasoning, algebra, and geometry. The writing section will include an essay section. A detailed description of the SAT and a sample test are available online at www.collegeboard.com.

Scores on the SAT will give colleges some indication of the student's aptitude for college work. College entrance examination scores are only one factor used by admissions officers, together with your high school record and other personal and extracurricular information, in making decisions about your readiness to successfully undertake college studies. Colleges accept students who have achieved a range of scores. We encourage additional preparation for the SAT, through a preparation course, tutoring, practice books or online study guides.

SAT Subject Tests:

The SAT Subject Tests are designed to measure the knowledge and skills you have developed in a particular subject area. They are administered in the following areas: Literature, Math Level I, Math Level IIC (calculator), Biology, Chemistry, Physics, American History, World History, French (reading only), German (reading only), Modern Hebrew, Italian, Latin, and Spanish (reading only).

Very few colleges require SAT Subject Tests. Some colleges specify the tests to be taken; others allow applicants to choose those they feel best qualified to take. Since testing requirements vary from college to college, it is imperative that students are aware of each school's admissions requirements. Know the testing requirements of the schools you are considering. You should also see your counselor and subject area teachers to discuss which tests to take. Visit www.collegeboard.com for additional information.

ACT: The ACT test measures knowledge and skills typically taught in high school that are important for successfully completing college work. The ACT measures four areas: English, Mathematics, Reading and Science Reasoning. The ACT offers an optional writing section which we encourage all students to take. The ACT does not penalize for wrong answers. In addition, unlike the SAT, the ACT student report provides information to the student about his/her educational, occupational and college planning.

Advanced Placement Examinations:

Advanced Placement (AP) tests are designed to measure in depth a student's proficiency in a given subject area after having taken the Advanced Placement (AP) course in that subject. Each exam is three hours in length. Students who demonstrate a sufficiently high level of achievement on the tests may be granted college credit for work they have completed in high school, or they may be excused from a freshman course requirement in a specific subject. AP tests are given at the high school during May. Students register at the high school through their AP teachers.

COLLEGE VISITS

A visit to a college you are considering is a good way to find out if you would be comfortable going there. February and April vacations of your junior year are a good time to start visiting colleges. If you can't go, definitely plan to visit some colleges during the summer before your senior year. Even if you don't plan to attend a school in the Boston area, it is a good idea to visit some local schools to get a sense of what different types of colleges are like. When you visit, try to attend some classes and talk to students and teachers if classes are in session while you're there. It's important to talk to as many people as possible so that you are not unduly influenced by one person's biases.

What to Look for and Ask on a College Visit:

Campus Life:

1. Does the appearance of the campus please you?
2. Are the buildings and grounds well maintained?
3. What are the living arrangements for freshmen? size of dorms? singles? single sex or coed dorms? doubles? house or college system? triples? fraternities/sororities? off-campus apartments? suites?
4. What is the system of housing allocation after freshman year? What are the living arrangements for upper classmen? Are upper classmen guaranteed space on campus?
5. Are there limitations on visiting hours or "quiet hours"?
6. What kind of campus security system does the school have? How safe is the campus?
7. How important is athletics to the college community?
8. Are clubs and intramural sports offered?

Intellectual Atmosphere:

1. What is the student attitude toward learning? Do most seem to enjoy their courses?
2. Do students exchange ideas outside of class?
3. Is there active interest in political or social issues?
4. Are there cultural opportunities available on campus? Off campus? (concerts, art galleries, museums, theaters?)
5. Is interest in intellectual matters an admired value?
6. Does it appear that many students are "grinds"?
7. Do most students seem to place more importance on their studies or on other activities?
8. How available are professors to assist students outside of class?
9. Is there pressure for good grades? Is the pressure internal or external? Does there seem to be cutthroat competition among students to get into graduate school?
10. How do you evaluate the intellectual atmosphere?
11. How do you feel you would fit in intellectually?
12. How easy is it to enroll in desired classes?

Social Atmosphere:

1. Does social life revolve around the campus, or do most people leave on weekends?
2. Does the college provide social activities? (concerts, dances)
3. Are there many opportunities to attend social events off campus? Do many students take advantage of these?
4. Are opportunities and facilities for socializing readily available? Do the dorms have living rooms? Do the dorms have eating facilities? Is there a student center? Are there rules governing curfews, driving, drinking, smoking?
5. Do clubs and organizations provide outlets for socializing? Are these activities? predominantly traditional, exotic, issue-oriented, or artistic?
6. How important are fraternities/sororities to social life? What percentage of freshmen pledge a sorority or fraternity? If you were not a member, how would that affect your social life and self-esteem?
7. Are there social pressures? (How important are money, possessions, and appearances?)
8. Are the students friendly? Have they been helpful to you?
9. Does there seem to be a "typical" student? If so, how would you characterize him/her?
10. How well is the atypical student accepted?
11. How much racial and ethnic diversity is there at the school?
12. What is the geographic distribution of the student body?
13. Is there school spirit?
14. How do you evaluate the overall social atmosphere?
15. How do you feel you fit in?

INTERVIEWS

Some schools and colleges require an interview, others strongly recommend one, and others have no requirements. Having an interview provides a good way to leave a personal impression with a college. It is also an opportunity for you to ask questions.

A. Making the Interview Work for You: Preparation

How do you convince a prospective college interviewer that you should be admitted?
Be prepared!

1. Make an appointment by calling the admissions office or registering on the college's admission website. The earlier you arrange for your interview, the more likely it will occur when you want it to. Therefore, it is advisable to contact competitive colleges this summer to arrange for fall interview dates.
2. Dress and conduct yourself appropriately. Be prepared, take an active part in the interview.
3. Know something about the college before you arrive. Read about the college in advance to become an informed prospective candidate. You do not want to ask a question that could have been easily answered by reading material already sent to you.
4. Know what it is that you want to learn about the school. Take a note pad with you. Before the interview, jot down any questions you have. Make sure those questions are answered during the interview. The kind of questions you may want to ask are the ones you have not found answers to in the materials you received. Perhaps you want to know more about particular course, class sizes, or how much work is expected of you in and out of class. If it interests you, check out whether professors teach the freshman courses or if they are taught by graduate students. You may want to inquire about typical costs for social activities. This is a good time to ask about possibilities for part-time jobs, loans or scholarships. Ask if jobs on campus are limited to those students awarded financial aid. Find out whether freshmen can fully participate in all student activities on campus. Find out about dorms and how many meals per week the meal plan provides, etc. You may have questions about the availability of religious facilities and/or organizations on campus or nearby.
5. Know yourself well. Be thoroughly familiar with your academic record. Obtain a copy of your transcript from the Guidance Office to take with you. Know your SAT and ACT scores. Know the areas of your greatest strengths and interests. Know what courses you will take (or are taking) in your senior year. Know your record of participation in activities from 9th grade on, in and out of school. Be able to talk about your hobbies, interests, educational plans, things you have read in the past year, significant travel

and work experience (paid and volunteer). The interviewer may ask you to elaborate on one or more of these.

Occasionally an interviewer will just say, “Tell me about yourself.” Don’t be thrown by this. If you have prepared yourself by following our suggestions, you can jump right in.

B Sample Questions Asked by College Interviewers

(Think about these before the interview)

Questions About Your Prospective Major:

1. In what major fields are you interested? Have you had any experience in this field? How did your interest in this field develop?
2. What are you interested in doing after college and why?

Questions About your Academic Record and your High School:

1. What is your rank in class? (Explain that Westwood High School does not rank its students, but that a weighted and unweighted GPA is reported on a bar graph.) Therefore, you should know your GPA.
2. What are your SAT and ACT scores? If there is a discrepancy between your grades (or GPA) and scores, can you explain it?
3. What are your favorite subjects? Why?
4. What books have you read that weren’t required reading in the past year?
5. How large is your class? Describe your high school and the different groups within your class? Where do you fit in?

Questions About your Activities and Interests:

1. Describe the community in which you live and your participation in it (i.e. work, sports, church).
 2. How do you most enjoy spending your spare time?
 3. What is/are your most important activity(ies)? Why?
 4. What work or volunteer experiences have you had during school or summers?
 5. What have you learned from these experiences?
- Besides working, how have you spent your summers?
- What are some of the fine qualities that may set you apart from the other twenty people I spoke with today?
- What local, national or global issues concern you most?
- What is the most significant event in your life up to this point?
- How do you get along with people?

Questions About your Interest in this College:

1. Who or what influenced you to consider this school?
2. Do you know any alumni or present students of this college?
3. Do you plan to attend here if you are accepted?
4. What other colleges have you visited? What others do you plan to apply to?
5. What do you think this college can do for you?
6. What do you think you can do for our college?
7. What questions do you have for me?

Although this may never be mentioned, the interviewer is mentally noting and looking for your attitude, clues about you, your enthusiasm, and your ability to express yourself.

C. What to do when you arrive on campus:

1. Allow sufficient time to arrive at the school before your scheduled interview.
2. Go on a tour, ideally scheduled before your interview, so that you are more informed about the college.
3. If you are not interviewing, go on a tour, and attend an information session.
4. Talk to students, a very useful source of information about a college; but, remember that a student's personal opinions must be considered with care.
5. Visit a class; talk with a faculty member if possible.
6. Have a meal on campus.
7. Visit the cafeteria or student union to meet students.
8. Read the campus newspaper to find out what the issues are on campus during your visit. Check the bulletin boards in the student union or cafeteria.
9. ASK QUESTIONS!

D. When you have your interview:

1. Be prompt. Call to let them know if you're going to be delayed.
2. Do not be concerned if your interviewer is someone other than the dean or director of admissions. If the interview is an important part of the admissions process at a college, all interviews given on campus have equal weight. All interviewers are well trained and prepared to represent the institution.
3. Be yourself, do not pretend to be something or someone you are not!
4. Answer questions to the best of your knowledge and ability. Do not be afraid to admit that you don't know something.
5. When stumped, gain the time you need to think by asking a question such as, "I'm sorry, I don't understand what you mean. Could you repeat that please?"
6. When you do not understand, simply ask for clarification by asking the above question or by asking, "Could you please clarify the question? I'm not sure I understand what you mean."
7. Don't cross your arms. It makes you appear bored and unenthusiastic.

8. Look directly into the interviewer's eyes. Try not to shift around.
9. Sit up straight, legs crossed or together and lean forward toward the interviewer to show interest.
10. Watch for non-verbal clues that clue you to how the interviewer is responding to you. Is he/she relaxed, alert, interested, following you and encouraging you with nods, smiles and comments? If so, you are on the right track. Develop your points fully, but do not talk too much! As soon as you see or sense a loss of interest (paper shuffling, averted eyes), perhaps you are going off the track. Get back on by asking: "Have I covered that point adequately? Is there anything else you would like to know?"
11. If the interviewer asks what you feel you can offer the college, comment on such topics as:
 - a. Your active interest in learning.
 - b. Your desire to meet people and be a member of the community.
 - c. Your intention to learn and mature by involving yourself in all aspects of the school.
12. When you are asked questions by the interviewer, do not answer with just a "yes" or "no". Elaborate briefly. The interviewer wants to hear you converse.
13. Pay attention to the interviewer and try to respond directly and specifically. Don't try to analyze the interview while it is in progress.
14. If an aspect of the college or pertinent information has not been discussed in the interview and you feel it is important, be sure to mention it in a way that is comfortable to you.
15. Before you leave, be sure that you record the interviewer's name and title, the date of the interview and any further action or information requested of you. Thank the interviewer for his/her time and interest in you. Shake hands.

E. After the Interview

Send a thank you note to the interviewer. It shows the interviewer you have taken the time and interest to think about your recent interview. Try to trigger the interviewer's memory of you in a personal way.

Remember, colleges interview hundreds of people. SOMEHOW YOU MUST STAND OUT! The best way to do this is to show confidence, willingness to learn and work, and a genuine excitement about the challenge of going to his/her college. Enthusiasm is contagious! You must help the interviewer visualize you as part of the student body. Smile, be friendly and polite.

THE ESSAY QUESTION ON AN APPLICATION

The essay you write for your college application is your opportunity to present yourself as a person. It is your opportunity to tell something unique about yourself that you think is indicative of your potential.

The content of the essay should be a personal and subjective description of two or three experiences, which have been most influential in your life. You should describe your feelings and your personal reactions while you were having the experience, and discuss the insights and new views you learned from the experience. Selecting a couple of events or relationships which you regard as very important to you and discussing them as you would with a friend will be a more powerful and unique introduction of you than a brief survey of many experiences. Avoid global, idealistic statements. Your goal is to introduce yourself as an individual, to arouse the readers' interest in you, and make them want to meet you.

Remember that the admissions committee members who are reviewing your application may be reading thirty or more essays at one time. They may skim and only read completely if a particular phrase or statement catches their attention. *Your style should be clear, brief and vivid.* Avoid long and complicated sentences. The lead sentences of your paragraphs should be designed to attract the interest of the readers and draw them into reading every word.

Writing application essays is very difficult. It is usually helpful to pretend that you are writing to a friend because you will be more personal and direct. In fact, having a friend read your first draft may help you recognize if you are being too impersonal, stilted, and philosophical. You would never say to a friend, "I want to be a doctor because I want to help my fellow man in an important and meaningful way." Nine of out ten applicants make a statement like that in their essay and reading them gets very boring for the admissions committee.

Beware of eliminating the spontaneity and disclosure of personal feelings as you rewrite your essay. Sometimes students write a first draft, which is a sensitive and intimate communication about a personal experience, but after many re-writes their final "perfected" essay becomes an objective formal description completely lacking the warmth and personal insight, which was present in the first draft.

Essays take time. Don't leave this task to the last minute. It is wise to begin gathering your thoughts about your essays during the summer before your senior year. Write for applications early so you will know in advance what essay question will be required.

A. Checklist for Writing the Essay:

Planning

1. Make sure you know what the question is asking. If there is more than one part to it, be sure to answer each part.

2. List the points about yourself that you want to communicate.
3. Make an outline. Does your argument follow logically? Have you been able to weave into those important points about yourself?

Writing

1. Referring to your outline, begin writing, allotting approximately the same amount of space for each part of your argument.
2. Your opening paragraph or sentence (depending on the length of your essay) should control the whole essay. All the arguments or points must follow from it.
3. If you have written an opening paragraph, it should be interesting in itself and not just a bold statement of the essay question.
4. Your concluding paragraph must be a logical outcome of the essay. It should include an interesting concluding idea without restating the opening paragraph or the essay question.

Revising

1. Don't be too wordy. Eliminate words where possible. Within reason, use clauses or phrases to combine sentences.
2. Follow the rules of grammar and good writing.
 - a. Eliminate dangling participles.
 - b. Make sure every sentence is a complete one.
 - c. Check for spelling errors.
 - d. Avoid repeated use of the same words, phrases and sentence types. Use synonyms. Vary sentence structure.

B. Sample Essay Questions:

1. Select an international, national or local issue or problem. State your position on it and propose a resolution to the problem.
2. Select a book, film, or play that has had a significant influence on you and explain why.
3. Describe a most significant success or failure that you have had in your personal experience and the effect it has had on you.
4. Write a 300-word autobiography.

5. Please write an essay on a topic of your choice. Any subject or form of writing which you feel will best convey your ideas, personality, originality, or writing style to the admissions committee will be appropriate.
6. Describe a significant person in your life, one who has had a major impact on you.
7. Pose a question you would like to have been asked on this application and answer it.
8. What career do you plan to pursue and what led you to this decision?
9. Briefly discuss one or two academic experiences (a book, paper, project etc.) that you have had in your high school career that has meant the most to you.
10. What aspect of your extracurricular, work or community life has meant the most to you and why?

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

During the early fall of the senior year all seniors will participate in a workshop led by the counselors. The purpose of the workshop is to instruct students about the application process. At that time you will receive detailed information about the application process.

A. Recommendations:

1. Counselor Recommendations

In the fall of your senior year your counselor will write a comprehensive letter of recommendation for you. This letter is sent with your transcript to all schools to which you apply. This recommendation is developed through personal contact with you, knowledge of your academic and extracurricular record and teacher input. The recommendation is started after the Student Descriptive Questionnaire is submitted.

2. Teacher Recommendation

Recommendations should be from teachers for whom you have done good work and with whom you have had a positive relationship. Most colleges want one teacher letter of recommendation. You should first inquire whether a teacher is willing to write one for you. Since teachers receive many requests, you must request teacher references by June 1st, your junior year.

In the Fall of senior year you will give teachers a manila folder with your name on it. The folder should contain the following:

1. Teacher Recommendation Checklist.
- *2. One (1) teacher recommendation form, if required.

*If the teacher writing your letter is submitting electronically, you do not have to provide forms.

Since most colleges request similar information, teachers generally write one letter of recommendation which they will duplicate and mail to every college you indicate. Please provide the manila folder with all your forms to your teacher **at least one month** prior to your first application deadline.

3. Other Letters of Recommendation

Sending too many letters of recommendation can work against you. As a rule of thumb, do not have people send letters unless they know you well enough to provide direct observations of your performance in an area not already documented. Your counselor will be able to advise you about the appropriateness of extra recommendations.

B. What To Do When the Admission Decisions Come In:

Seniors should inform their counselors of action by colleges on their applications.

Most students will receive some deny letters. Some admissions experts feel that students haven't "reached" enough if they get into all of the schools to which they have applied.

Do not take a denial personally. Admissions decisions are made based on the needs of the school and the composition of the applicant pool that year. Sometimes students are denied by schools they would have been admitted to in a previous year. One is not a failure if she/he did not get into a particular school. If students have been careful in their research and investigation of colleges and followed the rule about applying only to schools they would gladly attend, they will be fine. If you hear negatively from a school that you had considered a safety, please see your counselor immediately. Each spring counselors receive a list of colleges across the country that still have openings.

Seniors should hear from all their schools by April 15. When students are sorting out their acceptances and trying to decide on the school they will attend, it is helpful to 1) talk to several people-counselors, friends, current students, 2) visit the campuses again, 3) compare the courses, activities and other opportunities among the schools, and 4) compare expenses and/or financial aid packages.

Once the decision is made, students need to send in their deposits by May 1, the Candidate's Reply Date. Courtesy dictates that students inform their other colleges that they will not attend.

Some students will be notified they are on a waiting list, which means that the college has many more qualified applicants than they can accept. Waiting List status dictates that the admissions officers feel that the student can do the work but that there is simply not enough room in the freshman class. There are specific strategies that help when students are wait listed at their first choice school. Therefore, students should seek the help of their counselor if they are put on a waiting list.

FINANCIAL AID

Many families are understandably concerned about meeting rising college costs. Any candidate for admission to college should apply for financial aid if his or her family feels that they may not be able to pay the entire cost. Early in the senior year, students should be sure to check the financial aid deadlines and the forms required by each college they are considering. Students should pursue all sources of financial aid; counselors and college financial aid officers can offer important suggestions and advice. Early in November, the Guidance Department sponsors a financial aid information night, which parents of seniors should plan to attend.

A. Sources and Purposes of Student Financial Aid:

There are two types of financial aid: need-based and merit-based. Need-based forms of financial aid comprise the major portion of assistance available for postsecondary education. Eligibility for need-based aid is determined by the difference between the cost-of-attendance and the family contribution. Merit-based aid is generally given to students in recognition of special skills, talent and/or academic ability.

There are two types of need-based assistance: grant aid and self-help. Grant aid does not have to be repaid and does not require a service commitment. Self-Help assistance includes loans (which require repayment) and employment (a part-time job usually within the institution). There are primarily four sources of grant aid and self-help: federal, state, institutional, and private.

The federal government is the largest single source of student financial aid funds. The programs include Pell Grants, Stafford Student Loans (SSL), Parent Loans to Undergraduate Students (PLUS), and Supplement Loans to Students (SLS). Other sources include three campus-based programs: Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG), Perkins Loans (formerly National Direct Student Loans), and College Work-Study. Institutions are allocated funds for each of the campus-based programs. The amount of funds for the Pell Grant and campus-based programs are determined annually by Congress.

State sources of aid are usually administered through a state agency and include grants/scholarships, loans, and work. All New England states have scholarship or grant programs. The regulations and application procedures vary for each state. Ask your guidance counselor for information about your state's program.

Institutional sources of aid are provided and controlled by the institution. They may include grants/scholarships, loans, and campus employment. Many colleges also provide a variety of payment plans and loan options for parents. Your parents should consult with the financial aid office of the school to which you are applying for details.

Private sources of aid are derived from community organizations, foundations, professional associations, corporations, community lending institutions, and parents' employers. Need is usually considered but other factors may be considered when determining your eligibility. A

separate application is usually required for these programs. Check with your guidance counselor and local library for information concerning these scholarships. The Westwood Community Scholarship Fund also provides scholarships to W.H.S. seniors. Students apply for these scholarships in April. The scholarship recipients are announced at graduation.

B. Forms to File:

Parents and students should become familiar with the various forms you will be required to file in order to receive financial aid. The CSS/ Financial Aid Profile is used by many colleges, universities, and scholarship programs to award their own private funds. These institutions and programs combine profile information and information on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), to make decisions about these funds. The College Scholarship Service, (CSS), of The College Board sends your Profile information directly to the institutions and programs you list; you pay a fee for the collection and reporting the Profile information.

You must complete the FAFSA to apply for financial aid from Federal student financial aid programs. Such programs are Federal grants, loans and work-study monies. You can also use the FAFSA to apply for some state and private aid, although certain state and private aid programs may require an additional form.

You must also file specific institutional financial aid forms with all colleges or universities that require their own forms. Make sure to check each school's financial aid deadline, so that you will have all required forms filed by that date. You should file the Profile and FAFSA by the earliest deadline of all the schools to which you are applying.

C. Definition of Need:

Colleges review the information you provide on your Profile and FAFSA to determine your family contribution and financial need. The family contribution includes a parent contribution, student income contribution, and student contribution from assets and/or benefits. Your family's income, assets, debts, family size and extenuating circumstances are considered when determining the family contribution. Parents with special or unusual circumstances should discuss their situation with the financial aid officers at the colleges to which their sons/daughters are applying.

Financial need is the difference between what it will cost a student to attend a college and the family contribution. After your financial need has been determined, most colleges will award financial aid as a "package". The package may include a combination of a scholarship or a grant (money that does not have to be paid back), a loan (to be paid back after the student leaves college), and campus employment (money earned while in school and sometimes related to the student's field of study).

One important point to remember is that financial need will usually increase as college costs increase. You should compare the types of financial aid offered by the colleges you are considering. If you need assistance, speak with your guidance counselor.

D. Checklist: What to Do and When to Do It:

If you think you need aid to continue your education, your chances of getting it are best if you apply in the right way at the right time.

1. Ask for information about financial aid opportunities and application procedures when writing to the admissions office of each college on your list.
2. Ask your counselor for general financial information and forms on file in the guidance office.
3. Make sure you know what forms to file. The most commonly used forms are the FAFSA and the PROFILE. The FAFSA is required of all colleges and is available online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. The PROFILE is required of most private colleges, but not the state colleges and universities. There is a registration fee plus a reporting fee for every college the student applies to which requires the PROFILE. The PROFILE should be filed as soon as you know which schools you will apply to. The FAFSA form cannot be filed until after January 1.
4. Before mailing the forms, make a copy of all completed forms for your records.
5. Respond promptly to any request for additional information about your need analysis form so that there will be no further delays in processing your request for aid.
6. Check to see if other financial aid forms are required by the colleges to which you are applying. Complete the forms as early as possible and return them to the college.
7. State funds: All New England states have scholarship or grant programs to help you attend the college of your choice. Ask your counselor for information about the program.
8. Comparing Financial Aid: You should compare the types of aid offered by the colleges you are considering.
9. Pay close attention to the financial aid award letters you receive. Notify the college whose offer you are accepting, and inform the other colleges of your decision so that financial aid they reserved for you can be freed for other applicants. If you also receive aid notices from the state or federal programs, read them carefully and be sure to follow any directions they contain so that you can be certain of getting your aid.

E. Private Scholarship Sources:

1. Check for information about other aid sources. You may qualify for a private scholarship, grant or loan program based on academic achievement, religious affiliation, ethnic or racial background, community activities, hobbies or special interests, organizational memberships, artistic talents, athletic abilities, other special skills, career plans or proposed field of study.
2. The Guidance Department has developed a comprehensive file of scholarships provided by public and private organizations as well as merit scholarships offered by specific colleges. Every month we post a list of scholarships you can apply for on the Guidance web site (www.westwood.k12.ma.us) Keep looking!
3. Another excellent source for scholarship information is the Higher Education Resource Center located in the basement of the Boston Public Library. It is worth the trip to Boston to make use of their materials. The Westwood Public Library also has books about scholarships.
4. Find out if your parents' employers, professional associations or labor unions sponsor any aid programs.
5. Check with community organizations and civic, cultural, and fraternal groups to see if they sponsor scholarship programs at the local, state, or national level. Also check with local religious organizations, veterans' posts, businesses, and industries.
6. If either parent is a disabled veteran or if either died during the service or from a service-related injury, you may be eligible for special assistance. Contact the nearest office of the Veterans Administration for information.
7. Ask about benefits from vocation rehabilitation or other social service agencies if you think you qualify for assistance.
8. Determine how payments from each aid source will be made to you. Generally, payment of financial aid is made at the time you enroll. Find out if there are additional procedures or forms to file in order to receive aid.

F. Westwood Community Scholarships and Awards:

Financial aid is also provided by community agencies, foundations, corporation unions, religious organizations, clubs, and civic, cultural, and fraternal groups. Need is considered, and other factors may be taken into account in determining a student's eligibility. Westwood Community Scholarships are announced at graduation.

G. Loans

Explore alternatives. If the college of your choice cannot provide you with enough aid to meet your full financial need or if your family cannot contribute what is expected, you may want to consider borrowing. Learn about loans, the interest rates, repayment schedules, and other terms and conditions before you apply. Government-sponsored loans, such as the Guaranteed Student Loan Program, usually have the lowest interest rates and the most flexible repayment arrangements. If you do apply for a Guaranteed Student Loan, give yourself enough time (at least six weeks) to have the loan papers processed.

IF YOU WORK AFTER GRADUATION

A. HOW TO FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU WANT TO DO

As a high school student, you do not need to know the exact job you will eventually be working at, or even which career field to enter. Career decision-making is a long process that takes place over many years. You may change your mind more than once. People who begin working now will be in the work force for 45 to 50 years! You have time to try various jobs, make mistakes, change your mind, and grow out of one career and into another. The average American changes careers five times in a lifetime. It is important however, that you think about the factors that are part of the career decision-making process: ability, education, interests, your own value system, etc.

If you are planning to work full-time after graduation from high school, the first decision you will need to make is what type of job you are seeking. If you are not sure of your plans or the kind of job you would like, meet with your counselor soon to find out how to go about deciding on a job. An interest inventory will help to give you some job ideas by matching your interests with the interests of people who are successful and happy in a variety of jobs. Make sure to spend time using the resources in the Guidance Office to gather information on different kinds of jobs.

To find out where to seek employment, check the internet, newspapers, trade magazines, placement agencies, government (state-local) employment services, training centers, school work programs, and civil service jobs posted in your local post office. Some of the most lucrative jobs may be found in your own backyard. You should talk with your parents, relatives, and friends about possible job openings. The more people you talk with about your interests and your plans, the better your chances for finding the employment opportunity you are seeking. Prepare your resume and practice filling out job applications. Ask your counselors and teachers for recommendations.

B. INTERVIEWING FOR A JOB

1. Preparing for the interview:

- a. Find out all you can about the company
- b. Be confident
- c. Bring your resume and cover letter or send one ahead if requested.
- d. Be prepared to talk about your work experiences.
- e. Dress appropriately.
- f. Arrive for the interview early. You may be asked to wait, but it will make an excellent first impression.

2. At the Interview:

- a. When you are introduced, remember the interviewer's name.

- b. If requested to fill out forms, be brief. Use your resume or notes for reference.
- c. Be energetic; ask questions; talk about goals; sell your skills and training.
- d. Relax; be yourself; be honest and tactful; present yourself in a way that the employers think they need you.
- e. Indicate you know the company; its policies, its product, and how you think you would fit there.
- f. Don't evade questions; answer them honestly and simply.
- g. Look at your interviewer while talking.
- h. Don't slouch or chew gum.
- i. When questions are asked to which you do not know the answer, don't fake it; simply answer the questions as honestly as you can.
- j. The interviewer wants to talk to you. Do not bring anyone with you to a job interview.
- k. Talk about your past work experiences; try not to brag or exaggerate. Try not to conceal previous work records (even though they may have been bad experiences) or complain about past employers or supervisors. BE POSITIVE!
- l. Conclude the interview with an arrangement for finding out the prospective employer's decision on hiring and the date by which you will hear.
- m. As a follow-up, write a note thanking the person who interviewed you for his/her time and consideration.
- n. Do not become discouraged if during your first interview you become nervous or fail to present yourself favorably. You will improve with time.

APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS

Apprenticeships involve on-the-job training under the supervision of a skilled craftworker, combined with related technical instruction. The Apprentice is usually a high school graduate of legal working age with manual dexterity and other characteristics directly related to the apprenticeship occupation to be learned. Length of training varies depending on the occupation and is determined by standards adopted by the industry. The minimum term of apprenticeship is one year.

Apprenticeship occupations can be found in such industries as electronics, construction, service, metal working, public administration, and medical and health care. Related training covers such areas as mathematics, blueprint reading, applied English, and other technical courses needed for the specific occupation. There are approximately 800 apprenticeship occupations currently recognized by the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training and the State Apprenticeship Agencies. Wages paid the apprentice begin at approximately half those of the fully trained craftworker and usually advance at 6 month intervals until the apprentice completes training. Then the apprentice is paid the full craftworker wage. Apprenticeship programs may be sponsored by an employer, a group of employers or a union. Often program and unions form joint apprenticeship committees, which determine industry needs for particular skills and the kind of training required, and set the standards for acceptance into the programs.

Additional information may be obtained by contacting the local office of the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training, U.S. Department of Labor, and the State Apprenticeship Agency.

REGIONAL OFFICE BUREAU OF APPRENTICESHIP AND TRAINING:

JFK Federal Building
Room 520-B
Government Center
Boston, MA 02203
Telephone: (617) 565-2288

APPENDIX A

TEST DATE INFORMATION TO REMEMBER

Junior Year SAT/Subject Tests

Test Dates

March 14, 2015

May 2, 2015

June 6, 2015

Registration Deadlines

February 13, 2015

April 6, 2015

May 8, 2015

Senior Year SAT/Subject Tests

Test Dates (*Anticipated*)

October 3, 2015

November 7, 2015

December 5, 2015

Junior Year ACT Tests

Test Dates

April 18, 2015

June 13, 2015

Registration Deadlines

March 13, 2015

May 8, 2015

Senior Year ACT Tests

Test Dates (*Anticipated*)

September 12, 2015

October 24, 2015

December 12, 2015

Important Numbers to Be Used on Registration Forms:

222-375	CEEB Code, Westwood High School
22880	Test Center (SAT), Westwood High School
162240	Test Center (ACT), Westwood High School

Release and Send Scores:

Students are responsible for sending SAT and ACT scores to colleges. To send your released scores to colleges or scholarship programs go to collegeboard.com for SAT and actstudent.org for ACT. There is a fee to send scores to colleges.

Note: Only score reports from completed and scored tests will be sent to your colleges and scholarship programs. Scores from future tests for which you registered, but have not yet completed, will NOT be included. Check your SAT status to see which scores are available to send.

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE REQUEST FOR CONGRESSIONAL NOMINATION TO THE U.S. SERVICE ACADEMIES

(This format is intended as a guide. A separate letter must be sent to each Senator and Congressman to whom you apply.)

Your Street Address

Your Town

Date

The Honorable _____

United States Senate or House of Representatives

Washington, D.C. 20510

I desire to attend the (name of service academy) and to be commissioned in the class in July, ____.

Following is some information about me for your information:

Name:

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Date of Birth: _____

High School: _____

Social Security Number: _____

Names of Parents: _____

I have/haven't requested that a pre-candidate file be initiated for me at the Admissions Office.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Your signature

Your name

(typed or printed in full)

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE LETTER WITHDRAWING APPLICATION

(Sometimes circumstances intervene which make it necessary for a student to withdraw an application even before she/he has received a decision from a college. It is polite to inform the college of this situation.)

Your Street Address
City, State, and Zip Code
Date

Office of Admissions
Name of College
Address of College
City, State, Zip Code

Dear _____

My application for admission to _____ College/University has been filed with you. Since my plans for higher education have changed, I would like to withdraw my application for admission at this time.

Please accept my thanks for your assistance and consideration.

Sincerely,

Your signature

Your name
(typed or printed in full)

(Some colleges allow students to apply for Early Decision and also to make application to other colleges. If a student is accepted under Early Decision, colleges require that the student withdraw the other applications. A letter similar to the one above may be used for that purpose.)

APPENDIX D

SAMPLE LETTER INFORMING COLLEGE OF DECISION NOT TO ENROLL

Your Address
City, State, and Zip Code
Date

Office of Admission
Name of College
Address of College
City, State, Zip Code

Dear _____

I have received notification of your acceptance of me at _____
College/University. However, since I applied for admission, I have changed my plans, and will
not attend your school. Therefore, I want to inform you of my decision now so that another
applicant may be chosen in my place.

Thank you for the consideration and confidence that you have shown me. I shall continue to
think highly of _____ College/University.

Sincerely,

Your signature

Your name
(typed or printed in full)